5: Grinnell Q,T-5 (ca.1888) 1962
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Although a woman, all her life, was subject to some one's orders, either parent, relative, or husband, a man from his earliest childhood was free and independent. His father would not punish him for any misconduct, his mother dared not. At an early age he was taught to ride and shoot, and horses were given to him. By the time he was twelve, he had probably been on a war expedition or two. As a rule in later times, young men married when they were seventeen or eighteen years of age; and often they resided for several years with their fathers, until the family became so large that there was not room for them all in the lodge.

There were always in the camp a number of boys, orphans, who became the servants of wealthy men for a consideration; that is, they looked after their patron's horses and hunted, and in return they were provided with suitable food and clothing.

Among the Blackfeet, all men were free and equal, and office was not hereditary. Formerly each gens was governed by a chief, who was entitled to his office by virtue of his bravery and generosity. The head chief was chosen by the chiefs of the gentes from their own number, and was usually the one who could show the best record in war, as proved at the Medicine Lodge,[1] at which time he was elected; and for the ensuing year he was invested with the supreme power. But no matter how brave a man might have been, or how successful in war, he could not hope to be the chief either of a gens or of the tribe, unless he was kind-hearted, and willing to share his prosperity with the poor. For this reason, a chief was never a wealthy man, for what he acquired with one hand he gave away with the other. It was he who decided when the people should move camp, and where they should go. But in this, as in all other important affairs, he generally asked the advice of the minor chiefs.

The *I-kun-uh'-kah-tsi* (All Comrades) were directly under

[1] See chapter on Religion.

6: McFee E-4,5 (1959-1967) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

Values of the Indian-Oriented Group

183 177 The characteristics valued by the traditional Blackfeet, mentioned in Chapter 3, still persist in attenuated form. The changing conditions of life have required, however, that new avenues for their expression be found. At first glance such things as bravery, skill, wisdom, and generosity appear to be characteristics that would be valued by the average American. In order to understand how Indian-oriented and white-oriented definitions of these differ, it is necessary to recognize that since the life goals of the two groups are not the same, the premises from which value judgments are made are not the same.

The white-oriented values were seen to be consistent with the national economy and culture, and sufficiently integrated with these to be both vehicles to individual prestige and expressions of national goals. White Americans and white-oriented Blackfeet work toward their own and the nation's security, and to build a better future for their children.

As was shown in Chapter 4, the Indians had little choice but to accept the economic system of the dominant society and were pressed to accept the white values that went with it. To date the Indian-oriented, in general, have experienced little economic success and, perhaps because of this, have not adopted the values. In turn, the persistence of traditional values has contributed, in part, to this lack of economic success. This will be examined later. It is assumed that the present values of the Indian-oriented are the result of both persistence of traditional traits and new interpretations of these developed during the attempts at economic readaptation.

183 177 186 Because the Indian-oriented have developed no expectancy of success in the white man's economy, they have become neither imbued with the associated values nor committed fully to white goals. Instead they appear to have made more explicit what was once an implicit life goal of Indian society—to retain their ethnic identity. I make this inference from statements about "keeping the old ways alive," "showing the young people the things from the past," and from the attachment people show to bundles, regalia, doing Indian craft and art work, and other "Indian" symbols. The major common goal, hence a prime value, of the Indian-oriented society is to be *Indian*, and the present value judgments can be understood best as they relate to this goal. To illustrate this relationship, values are isolated that in reality are intricately interdependent.

183 177 *Individualism*, a valued characteristic in the old culture, is highly valued today. The Indian is concerned with individual achievement, social acceptance, increased prestige, and higher status, interests he shares with the white-oriented, but the expression of these values by individuals of the two orientations differs in light of their separate goals.

183 855 858 [861] The differences show up clearly in the way that Indian-oriented parents tend to treat their children. Ideally, children are seen as little individuals whose rights and wishes should be respected. They should be guided and directed but not forced into doing things. Indian parents think that white people are being cruel when they spank their children; teasing and ridicule are acceptable correctives.

6: McFee E-4,5 (1959-1967) 1972 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

tives. Children are wanted, loved but not coddled; no elaborate concern is expressed when they get bumps. Injuries are cared for, assurances given, and then everybody's attention turns to other things.

Babies and young children go wherever their parents go, with little concern shown about feeding and sleeping schedules. Children are at most public gatherings and play about quite freely regardless of the occasion. At one political rally I was sitting behind a young couple who were letting their son play with his father's keys. The rattling of the keys often made it hard to hear what was said, but nobody objected. Several times the keys fell to the floor with a loud clatter. I thought, hopefully, that that would end the game, but each time the father picked up the keys and gave them back to his son. I interpreted this to mean that the child's interests were as important as anyone else's.

A mother might suggest several times that her child share a toy with another, but the matter is dropped if the child is persistent in refusing. Children make many such decisions for themselves, because it is their right to do so. If they get too far out of line they will be ridiculed. This attitude continues throughout their lives. A school official told me about his frustration when a bright young student decided, against his urging, not to go to college. The boy's father was easily convinced and offered to push the case with his son, but returned several days later to report that he had tried. His son had said no, he did not want to go. That ended the matter. White-oriented men reported that their fathers rarely took no for an answer.

Present-day Indian-oriented people still have the strong emotional commitment to their name and self-image that was an attribute of the Blackfeet in the horse and buffalo days. Indian and white informants alike mention jealousy as a strong Indian personality trait and blame this for the inability of the Indian-oriented group to unite in support of any specific program. This self-concern perpetuates shame and gossip as powerful agents of social control. Other contrasting interpretations of individualism become apparent in later descriptions of the requisites for status within the Indian-oriented group.

Bravery, once manifest in war, hunting, and horse raiding, remains a valued characteristic. Ewers noted this in Blackfeet patriotism and their response to World Wars I and II. Many young men enlisted, the relatives of many honored them at a feast, and old men sang war songs and prayed for their success (Ewers 1955:322; 1958:324). Blackfeet continue to serve in our overseas conflicts. But in modern life the opportunities for achieving distinction by the regular exhibition of bravery are limited. This quality contributes to success in occasional fights, sports, and rodeos, and in some kinds of employment—the ranch hand and the fire fighter often have their bravery tested. But it is no longer a chief requisite for economic and social achievement. Other attributes are given greater recognition.

Skill is important today. Because Indian identification is the goal, abilities that contribute to this end are valued by the Indian-oriented; dancing, singing, art, crafts, and oratorical skills are recognized as important to the expression of ethnic identity. Several women are well known for their leather and beading work; the Blackfeet Art Association furthers the work of many tutored and untutored wood carvers and painters.

8: Ewers E,G-4,5 (1941-1951) 1971 NF6 Blackfoot NF6

plained to their daughters the honor bestowed upon the medicine woman because she had always been true to her husband.

Girls dressed in garments which were miniatures of those worn by their mothers. But small boys often went nude in the summer. Or, at most, they wore only a breechclout in warm weather.

Blackfoot children were accustomed to horses from infancy. As babies they rode on their mothers' backs atop a horse when camp was moved. When they were able to sit up, they rode on the travois or on horseback behind their mothers. At an early age, usually by their fifth year, they were taught to ride alone. The child was lifted into a high-horned woman's saddle on a gentle horse, and rawhide ropes were passed back and forth between pommel and cantle on each side and tied to prevent the child's falling. A parent led the horse around the camp at a slow walk. If the child was afraid, he could hold on to the saddle horn. As he gained in experience and confidence, he was led at a faster pace and was taught to use the reins to control his mount. When camp was moved, the child was tied in the saddle and the horse was led by an adult. Soon he was riding alone. By the time most children were six or seven years old, they were good riders. Some rode little saddles made for them by fond mothers or grandmothers. They also learned to ride bareback and to ride double, and they frequently competed in impromptu horse races.

Fathers looked after the education of the boys, but they were allowed much more freedom than were girls. Boys were taught to make miniature bows and arrows. They were encouraged to take part in rough, active body- and character-building games and sports. At the sun dance encampment fathers pointed out to their sons the great warriors of their tribe and cited the honors that came to men who were brave and successful at the arts of war. The hero-worshiping youth was told again and again the stirring narratives of the outstanding fighting men of his tribe, both past and present. He was reminded of the old Blackfoot proverb, "It is better to die in battle than of old age or sickness."

Boys of about ten years of age were entrusted with the daily

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

593 while their great-aunt struck their father with a tent-pin when he ordered
578 her off his land. They heard their mother accuse her near-relative of sexual indiscretions; they joined their usually mild grandmother as she threw stones at her sister-in-law's departing car.

152 There can be little doubt that children are sensitive to such violent
593 exhibitions, but their reactions vary considerably from situation to situation and from child to child. They may stand by seemingly unmoved, or they may join the fray with considerable enjoyment. They may shriek in fear, as the Pointed Plume children did the night their father and his brother fought so furiously. They may cry continuously, as the Dennis children did at school, because their parents' quarrels had frightened them
[115] so that they didn't want to return home while their father was there. Annie Curtis, a dignified informant of thirteen, gave it as her considered opinion that "girls minded their parents' quarrels more than boys."

857 This may well be so. Training and social sanctions make it easy for the
858 boy to escape an uncongenial home situation. At an early age he learns to ride a horse, at ten he is expected to help his father on the range or in the field. His frequent absences from home cause little comment. Two independent males, one eight, one eleven, laughed at us when we suggested that they tell their mother we were taking them for a swim. Girls' work, on the other hand, ties them to the house. They tend their little brothers and sisters; they learn to cook, to sew, to do beadwork. Only a few have the hardihood to face the certain disapproval that descends upon them when
[593] they stay out over night, even at a relative's. Bound to their homes by work
[578] and convention, they are more exposed than their young brothers to parental
[155] quarrels. They may see themselves not only as the little mothers of today, but as the cruelly beaten wives of tomorrow.

593 Frequently there is no way for boy or girl to avoid an unpleasant scene;
591 but whenever possible, a child will seek a refuge—for a short time if the
578 trouble blows over quickly—for years if it does not. Nellie Bending-Branch lives with her grandmother because her parents quarrel so much. May Big Water has spent most of her days at her grandmother's largely because her father and stepmother fought so frequently. Pointed Plume's adopted "favorite" returned to her own parents when he and his wife quarrelled seriously before separation.

[855] At times, a child is the terrified observer of parental conflict; at times, he is the unhappy victim of parental cruelty. Not infrequently, upon the remarriage of a mother, the children will remain with their grandparents, "because their stepfather might not be good to them." Stepmothers were viewed with equal misgivings, and not without cause. But there are also cases of children so mistreated by an own mother or father, that they have to be rescued by more compassionate, if more distant relatives.

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

"The Blackfoot are very fond of their children," wrote Maximilian in 1832;[197] and it would be utterly misleading if today we minimized the passionate warmth that most Blood lavish upon their children, particularly upon their younger offspring and their favorites. But where families are easily broken, where abandonment is not unusual, and where a child on his own initiative frequently seeks a parent substitute, the parent-child relationship necessarily lacks the intensity that distinguishes it in our culture. The trauma of separation is reduced as well as the child's resentment against the parent who has acted without much consideration for his well-being. Not that the hurt is forgotten nor even entirely forgiven, but a Julia Curtis will eagerly recount a visit to a mother who left her at nine to the ministrations of a paternal aunt and married a man on another reserve; a Ned Sloane will speak lovingly of the grandmother who urged that he be "thrown away" because he had caused his mother's death in childbirth; a Myrtle Pointed Plume will show no animosity toward her adopted father (actually her grandfather) although he insisted after she had spent eleven years as a *minipoka* in his household, that she remain with her own parents when he took another wife.

Early in childhood preference patterns are established and these function quickly in time of small strain or great crisis. One mother said that her eldest son always went to the home of his father's mother's sister when trouble was brewing; she herself spent much of her girlhood both before and after her mother abandoned her father, at her father's sister's. Another, speaking of her various children, said, "Myrtle is her grandfather Pointed Plume's favorite; Fanny is her grandfather William's favorite; Rosalie is her grandmother Julia's favorite; Harold is his father's favorite and Otis is mine." Only one, the eldest, was a true *minipoka* (she had been adopted by her paternal grandfather so he could more easily honor her and, what was equally important, continue to enhance his own prestige); but each of the others felt secure in his own brand of favoritism even if it was less ostentatiously expressed.

Despite their informal status, these lesser favorites expected the same privileged treatment from their warm supporters that true favorites received from theirs, and within reason they were not disappointed. When Julia's Rosalie, a child of seven, spilled water and came weeping to her grandmother because she was afraid her sister Myrtle *might* tell on her (which incidentally she showed no disposition to do), the grandmother's only comment as she took the little girl upon her knee was, "Myrtle is so spoiled."

Boys may find a haven with an older sister, but a young girl would hesi-

[197] Maximilian, *Travels*, p. 252.

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

At school a child is cut off from his home. At home, because of the distances between homesteads, he is cut off from the easy companionship of his age-grade, a companionship that developed naturally in the play camps of an earlier day and remained a continuing force for stability in the community. But even more disconcertingly, he is frequently cut off from those favored relatives from whom he expects unquestioning affection and support, while at the same time he is more intensely exposed to familial dissension. In time of trouble he still escapes, but often the only comfort possible is "going outside" and fighting it out alone, a convenient though perhaps not entirely satisfactory preparation for manhood.

Escape, in this violent society, is a necessary mechanism to relieve tension; but it is also a simple way to avoid responsibility. When Pansy Curtis cut her brother's neck while trimming his hair, she bound it with a towel and ran off to the house of her father's aunt without telling anyone; when she put all her aunt's fresh meat through the chopper instead of hanging it up to dry, she left her small cousin to bear the blame and hastened off to her father in the fields. When Charlie Bruce hacked off his sister's thumb, he stuck it on with axle grease and ran away before his grandmother returned; when he finished slaughtering a new-born calf before his admiring playmates, he left them to confess the crime and hurried to a forgiving aunt.

Patterns of escape established in childhood are repeated in adult life. Most situations are met by avoiding blame, shifting it, running away. The man who murdered his wife in 1939, immediately left his house to visit a neighbor. There he exhibited his gashed hand and said, "I got this while I was taking the butcher knife from my wife. She tried to kill me." But he failed to mention that she was lying mutilated and unconscious on the kitchen floor. The boy who was jailed for intoxication claimed that the bottle was not his and that he had not drunk a drop. When domestic conflict arises, either wife or husband leaves, sometimes temporarily, sometimes forever. Relatives and reserve may intervene, but "to go on a trip" is still the most favored solution in case of difficulty.

Siblings

The basic competitiveness of the society is frequently expressed in the sibling relationships. The institutionalization of the favorite inevitably creates an overtly rivalrous situation. Among the Teton Dakota, who call their privileged ones "child-beloveds," this situation for a variety of reasons is muted,[109] but among the Blood, the exploitation of the "child of plenty" for purposes of prestige has been completely uninhibited.

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[109] Goldfrank, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

11: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1966 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

593 858 Favorites are well aware of the envy their position arouses in their less petted brothers and sisters. One said,

> My father treated me with great affection. Others in the household obeyed him, but he often gave in to me. When I was little he carried me on his back so I wouldn't tire. He always took me with him and never said a mean word to me. Whenever I cried I was picked up immediately. When my mothers were cooking, I was allowed to go to the pot first and select the choicest morsel. All this showed I was a favorite son.
>
> I often fought with my little sister. Although my mother was sorry for her and sometimes tried to take her away when she was getting the worse of it, she would never punish or scold me. My sister always grabbed at my necklace. If she ripped it off, she would hide it, but my father always made her give it back to me. My sisters fussed about the special treatment I was getting. They were jealous and complained that our father wasn't treating them fairly.

593 858 579 Other unprivileged siblings have also been impelled to show their dissatisfaction. At a favorite's birthday feast attended by some fourteen old and respected members of society, a cake with candles (!) was proudly carried in. A young sister of the birthday child quickly blew them out. Neither the tearful protests of the *minipoka* nor a slap in the face diminished the unconcealed pleasure of the culprit. "If I blow out the candles," she said gleefully to the outraged favorite, "it is my birthday, not yours."

A little boy of six asked his father with pathetic eagerness, "Won't you have me for your *minipoka*, as my grandfather has my sister Myrtle?" Then gazing at his unshod feet, he added ruefully, "I cannot be a *minipoka*, I have no shoes." A stepson so resented the attention his stepfather lavished on his own daughters, who were favorites the "American way," that he left home to live with a married sister.

593 858 556 To be sure, not all families have favorites either in the traditional terms of in the "American way," but the pattern is so deeply ingrained in the struggle for wealth and recognition that it colors the thoughts and speech of many whose families have never been able to support a *minipoka*. One man went so far as to say, "A poor person might part with his last horse to buy a ceremonial object for his child in the hope that he would then be called a *minipoka*."

593 578 Rivalry, however, finds frequent expression even when "real" favoritism is not involved. A little girl of two threw her newborn brother from the bed and tried to strangle him. A young mother told how, as a child, she allowed her little sister's wagon to roll down hill, turn over, and spill the youngster in the mud because "she was so spoiled when she was sick." A grandmother recalled her resentment when her father gave a fine weasel-tail suit to an older sister and brought candy to a younger brother, despite the certain knowledge that food given to one sibling would surely be shared with all the others. A brother complained that his parents always gave in to his

12: Hanks & Richardson E,P-5 (1938, 1939) 1966
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Northern Blackfoot

a man reside in his wife's father's camp or his own father's camp, but he might follow a sibling who lived in the camp of this sibling's in-laws or this sibling's brother-in-law's camp which might be located elsewhere. We have cases of poor men "without any relatives" moving into the camp of a chief and being welcomed despite the absence of blood ties. There was considerable freedom of movement on this basis, and the man usually camped where he was furnished with the greatest economic advantages. 591

Consideration on the basis of terminology alone suggests a patrilineal weighting. A male derived no prestige from the line of females beginning with his sister who called him "older brother." We might regard these females as being sent to another line of males where they would honor all whom they called "grandparent." In keeping with this emphasis was the early marriage of daughters who thus went to live with their husbands before strong personal attachments were formed with their brothers. Substantiating this was the remoteness of a man's children to his sister. Also, as we have seen, honor was accorded the son-in-law by the daughter's parents rather than the daughter. Weighing against such a lineal emphasis, was the important relationship of son-in-law to son and to the parents themselves which firmly united the group. Furthermore, the phrasing of wedlock was that a wife "brought the husband children." In these words Blackfoot underscored cooperation between husband and wife rather than the alternative possibility that the rôle of a wife was solely bearing children for him. The children were his only for the duration of the marriage contract, since they normally followed the mother to her new residence after separation. Terminologically the cooperation of man and woman to produce children may be also seen in the fact that a man calls the children of his wife's sister, even though married to another man, "son" and "daughter." 601 602 601 581 593 [562] [586] [601]

Perhaps a stronger argument for patrilineality was the dramatisation by a son of his relationship to his father. In addition to the important position of the father in designating kinsmen, this showed itself in four principal ways. First, we have observed among our informants an eagerness to relate the tales of their father's prowess, a tendency to glorify him as a man great in battle, wealth and generosity. Where one informant's father had disgraced himself by presuming to be a chief when he had no claim to this authority, the informant seised upon his paternal grandfather as a proper alternative to glorify. Another indication of this dramatization is the frequent statement of an informant that he was a favored child. Most of our informants recognised the disadvantage of being favored children since the pampering accorded such a child usually misfitted him for a self-sufficient life after the father's death when many of the favored children went bankrupt. Nevertheless, informants persisted in stating that they were favored children. The desirability of being a favored child was, first, that one's own 593 554 601 [558] 593 858 554

12: Hanks & Richardson E,P-5 (1938, 1939) 1966
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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593 status was thereby elevated because of having received some sacred objects,
858 and, second, it was an oblique way of stating that one's father was wealthy,
554 hence a hard worker and a man of accomplishment. Further evidence for
paternal glorification may be seen in the almost monomanic anxiety over
597 being an adopted child. Any rebuff that a son might be given was frequently
593 the stimulus for morbid preoccupation over the reality of the blood relation-
[152] ship to the person he called father. In adopting a child, parents took elaborate precautions to show even greater affection toward the adopted child than toward their own in order to prevent this child from suspecting his adoption. When a child or grown person discovered this fact, it was a traumatic experience from which recovery was slow and difficult. Further indi-
593 626 cation of the importance of the paternal rôle in the life of a male was the universal comment made when a man deviated from acceptable behavior.
[867] People said, "He did not listen to his father's words." This had direct reference to the series of moral lectures that every father was supposed to make
593 to his children. Another aspect was the concept of inheritance of personality
827 characteristics from the father. This was particularly true of males who were supposed to inherit their father's courage in battle, memory for ritual, generosity, or eccentricities. Females were thought to inherit more from their mothers. On one occasion the question arose in a discussion with an informant as to why certain individuals did not listen to the moral lectures of their fathers. Our informant on this occasion stated that it was because they had inherited this particular deafness to the paternal sermons from their fathers who in turn had also not heeded the dicta of their fathers.

584 Certain prerogatives accorded the woman's family served to heighten the importance of the mother's family. Foremost among these was the privilege of the woman's parents to assume the initiative in soliciting marriage for
[581] their daughter. Indeed, it was frequent that a wealthy man picked a son-in-
[858] law who was poor but energetic with the aim of receiving his assistance in the camp. We have statements to the effect that on this account daughters were somewhat preferred to sons in that through them the circle of one's
585 followers and helpers could be more readily enlarged. Of conceivable sym-
[591] bolic importance was the fact that the woman's parents usually provided the first tipi with its furnishings for the new son-in-law, for this suggests that in
586 the remote past the son-in-law was actually living matrilocally. Furthermore, a woman usually returned to the camp of her parents or brothers with her unmarried children after the dissolution of a marriage. The husband
736 thereby lost whatever influence he may have had over the children. In the
[888] case of a woman whose husband died when she was too old for ready remarriage, her sons, by then economically self-sufficient, were expected to care for her, and they would accord her the authority due an elderly person in making important decisions.

16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Northern Blackfoot
Blackfoot Reserve

602 brothers-in-law, and sons. One's generosity is shown by fine gifts
43 to a father-in-law and a mother-in-law, and by treating one's younger
466 brother in school to a movie. Wives buy things not only for their
children but for their sisters' children. A man invites his brother-
602 in-law to dine at a Chinese restaurant. All of these cases reveal
431 segments of the intra-familial system of circulating wealth.

To estimate the amount of wealth per year passing through the family is difficult. Part of the groceries, clothing, and household expenses passes through this channel. More than half of the gifts that are made go to relatives. In terms of volume the family is probably the most important distributive mechanism on the reserve, even more important than the agency.

593 Near extinction, though not completely dead, is the institution
858 of the favoured child (*mini.puka*) which centres about the family.
431 Horses and blankets were given out lavishly in the name of the child. A wealthy father rewarded many times over the giver of a gift to his favourite child. A trifling object such as a bell might in the past be rewarded with a horse or a suit of buckskin clothing. Thus the favoured child institution was a special aspect of distribution where generosity was reciprocated by generosity without possibility of
593 comparable return. Though there are many who have been favoured
858 children in the past, only two children have that status today. The
177 schools are blamed for this because the children are taken away from their parents. The children themselves, caught in the set of values established by the school, no longer seek the favours that Indian parents give. A lad who has spent twelve years under Anglican or Roman Catholic influence finds it difficult to appreciate the gift of a Medicine Pipe and asks to be spared the honour.

585 Marriage may constitute a mechanism of distribution, if one of
431 the Blackfoot patterns is followed. Of three first marriages observed, one followed this pattern. The main feature is an exchange of presents between the two contracting families. The bride's family in a recent marriage gave eight horses which they had collected from various relatives. The groom's family, obligated to an equal return gift, could only collect six horses; accordingly a "democrat" and a wardrobe were thrown in. As far as possible those relatives who contributed are given something in return; the immediate family must go without in case of inadequate return gift, while the more distant relatives receive in proportion to their contributions. Among

20: Hungry Wolf I-4,5 (no date) 1980
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

TWO LITTLE SISTERS
by Paula Weasel Head's Sister,
Annie Red Crow

My father took my sister as his Minipoka, or favorite. I don't know why he picked her, but in those days it was a custom to do that. She got special treatment in whatever she did, and my father took her along to ceremonies and dances while I stayed home and played.

Not that our father treated me badly because of it. Sometimes he tried to get me initiated for some sacred thing at the same time as my sister, but I always ran away. I always preferred to play with my friends. I wasn't mistreated at all, but I sure was jealous because my sister was treated special. I used to do things to aggravate her. I would make certain faces at her, when no one was looking, and call her. "Ponah! Ponah!" I would say, quietly, and when she looked and saw my faces she would get real mad. Her real name is Different-People Woman, but they named her Paula, like they named me Annie. Paula Iron and Annie Iron, we were called in school. The old people couldn't pronounce Paula, so they called her Ponah, and that name has stuck with her.

Right from the time we were young my sister knew a lot about Indian ways. We would make dolls out of cloth and buckskin, and we would put real hair on them. She knew how to make them real good. She had a little painted tipi, and it was even transferred to her with a ceremony. After that she started pouting around our parents because she didn't have a medicine pipe bundle for her tipi. Our parents had several of them, at different times. So they made her a little medicine pipe bundle to hang up in her tipi. She took care of it just like our mother took care of our real ones—that's how she learned to care for medicine bundles so good. This small one she had wasn't transferred to her, it was just for imitation. But there

on to the west side of camp, where they again sat down to await anyone who wished to make offerings. They repeated this at the north and east ends, then returned to their lodge. 575 796 782

The next morning, people would have another opportunity to approach the Motokiks for prayers and blessings, this time in their lodge. There, the prayer seekers would be painted with the Center Pole design. We wished to have Mrs. Red Crow, the society's only remaining Scabby Bull, paint our son Wolf Child, so that he could add this blessing to his young life. [302] [123]

MINIPOKAIKS: THE FAVORITE CHILDREN

That evening, after the camp quieted down, we went next door again to visit Mokakin and Ponah. Eagle Ribs is always happy to entertain his guests with stories and talk. One of that night's subjects was *minipokaiks*—"favorite children." It was a tradition among our People for parents or grandparents to select a child as a favorite, one who showed particular promise to succeed in our Ways, given proper care and Teaching. If the parents of a minipoka went to many ceremonies, the child was likely to grow up to become a ceremonial leader. If the parents went to many social functions, the child was likely to learn much about leadership. Other minipokaiks, however, were simply spoiled and pampered so that they grew up expecting others to help them at the first sign of difficulty. Mokakin told us this legend, The Story of the Abandoned Children, about one minipoka of the long-ago. 574 [517] 593 858 [554] [155] 539 773

This happened a long time ago. I don't know how long. I heard the story told by others when I was young.

Some children were playing in the bushes by the camp. One of the children was a minipoka. His father was the head chief. Everybody was afraid of this chief; sometimes he got a bad temper, but he was Powerful and a good leader. 773 539

Oki, the kids were playing in the bushes. The minipoka had to go to the toilet, so he went away from the kids where they could not see him. But the other kids, they wanted to know how a minipoka would take care of himself. So they watched through the bushes. When they looked at him, their eyes got big. What fell to the ground was a [301] ***big pile of pretty shells, the kind Medicine Pipe*** [237] ***Owners wear as a necklace. The children ran out from the bushes and grabbed the shells. They were so excited that they knocked the minipoka down and took all the shells. When he got up, all the shells were gone and the kids ran off through the bushes with them, singing and laughing.***

The minipoka started to cry and ran home to his father. When he told his father what happened the chief became angry. Right away, he gave the order for camp to be moved and for no one to call home their children. The People had to do what the chief ordered. By the time the children were finished playing and got back to the camp, all they saw were the smoldering fires where their tipis used to be. They all sat down and cried because they knew that they had been abandoned.

One of our Old People was raised as a minipoka by his influential father. His parents located a young girl from a good family to become his wife, even though he was still a boy and living at home. He became a member of the Horns Society when he was only about twelve or fourteen, which is very unusual. The Old People say that even now he still acts like a minipoka and likes to see things done to suit himself. 593 858 [584] [575] [561] [157]

While we talked about minipokaiks, Ponah admitted she had been the minipoka of her father, Iron. She said that they had a painted Medicine Tipi transferred to her. When I asked 593 858 857 [852] [778] [432] [345]

[P.120-A]

what a little girl did with a painted lodge of her own, she told us:

"It wasn't a big tipi. It was just a little tipi for kids to play in. My mother made it for me to play in with my friends. My sister and I, we went to boarding school. My mother, she put up the tipi right by the school, and nobody bothered it. She put in a panichtan [lining], and she tanned some little animals and put the skins around the inside for rugs. She even made little bags from rawhide [parfleches] and put them all around the inside. When my mother came to visit us, she stopped on the way at Long-Nosed Crow's [Wilson's Trading Post] and bought a lot of groceries. Then she told me to invite all my friends to the tipi and we had a big dinner. Even the nuns sometimes came over to sit in the little tipi with us."

Ponah said that the design painted on the tipi had been dreamed of by somebody and was actually transferred to her. The tipi was painted yellow, with four lines of stars going from top to bottom, one line at each of the four directions.

Our conversation wandered on to other things, and of course, Mokakin told us more old Napi stories.

ANOTHER NAPI ADVENTURE

One time, Napi came out from a forest and found a bunch of Gophers playing in a meadow. This was how they played: One of them would lie down in an old fireplace and the others would cover him up with earth and then build a fire on top of him. As soon as the fire got too hot, the buried one would call out, "Tsst, Tsst!" Napi asked the Gophers if he could play, and they told him he could. So he lay down in the fireplace and the Gophers put earth over him and built a fire on top of it. As he got warm, he called out, "Tsst, Tsst!" The Gophers uncovered him. Soon it was Napi's turn to build the fire.

Napi said to the Gophers, "I think it's easier

Owner cried out, 'It sure was broken last year. Everyone saw it. But now it doesn't look like it was broken.' That is a very strange thing about this Pipe that my children have, here. It was broken, but when they opened the Bundle again, it was all right. That's very strange." 778 276 173

Running Wolf and Heavy Shield are remembered as Owners of our Pipe during the Old Days. One of its former Owners, White Horn, John Many Chiefs, gave me the following list of the Bundle's Owners as far back as he knew them: 793 778 551 [115]

1. Lizard Shoulder
2. Eagle Arrow
3. Frank Red Crow
4. Red Beads
5. John Cotton
6. Red Leggings
7. Bumble Bee
8. Arthur Healy
9. Wings
10. Bob Black Plume
11. Crow-Spreads-His-Wings
12. John Many Chiefs
13. Laurie Plume
14. Willie Scraping White (Wolf Old Man)
15. Bob First Charger
16. Frank Red Crow
17. Jim Red Crow
18. Stabs Down
19. Adolf Hungry Wolf

Arthur Healy is the earliest Owner still living. He was just a young man when he received the Bundle. It was a gift when he married the daughter of its former Owner, old Bumble Bee. Healy transferred the Bundle to old Wings, who died not long ago. 793 778 [584]

Wings took over our Bundle sometime in the 1920s. The minipoka of his father, Day Old Man, he joined the Pigeon Society when he was only ten years old. At fifteen he became a member of [858] [575] [561]

[p. 155-B]

house; the white people were standing all around them watching. 535

I always look forward to going to any kind of dance, even though I can only hear the drums and bells. I remember just what it looked like in the Old Days, and I always get up and pretend that I am dancing like when I was young again. My grandchildren sing Indian songs and drum and I get up and dance every night. [541] [177]

DAN WEASEL MOCCASIN

Dan Weasel Moccasin has worn his hair in two braids all his life and is often called "Braids," although his actual name is Yellow Horse Rider. He parts his hair down the middle, instead of to one side as was our usual custom. It is not proper to ask someone questions about personal habits, but it is known that Yellow Horse Rider keeps his hair long for holy reasons. 302 [551] [563] [576]

His father, old Weasel Moccasin, was a member of the Knife Owners band and the Horns Society. His mother was a member of the All Short People band. Yellow Horse Rider was their minipoka, and the usual favorite children's sacred articles were transferred to him. 958 [425] [778]

When he was seven, old Heavy Shield gave him a Medicine Lodge necklace. A Piegan holy woman named Handsome Gun Woman gave him another necklace during a Sun Dance ceremony. While he was young he also had the topknots from both the Backside-to-the-Fire Pipe and the Cree Medicine Pipe. Later he was given the rights to the sacred Lynx Tail Headpiece from Calling Last's Beaver Bundle. He never transferred it to anyone else, although Calling Last left it in his Bundle when he sold it to the museum. 958 857 778 425

Around 1943, Yellow Horse Rider took the Children's Medicine Pipe with his daughter, Eleanor. His father gave up his fine buckskin outfit and seven good horses for it. They kept the Pipe for five years before giving it up to John Red Crane. 778 425 852 [435]

highway. Their truck was quite damaged, although they escaped injury. The driver of a passing auto offered them a ride. They took most of their equipment and crammed it into the cab, to lock it up. 593 778 439

The next day when they returned to their truck, they discovered that someone had stolen everything. This made Frank quite upset. So she asked him what was inside the old rawhide container. He told her that it had contained the flag and other sacred articles for the ancient Mountain Sheep Painted Tipi, and that he was going to be paid well for it in Great Falls. That made her quite upset and she told him so and got Frank to agree not to sell any more sacred things.

Apparently, Frank and his previous wife had made quite a business of selling Indian things. When she first married him, one wall of his house was covered with shelves containing all sorts of craft materials—beads, shells, hides, dyed porcupine quills, and even sacred paints. His first wife was an excellent craftsman who could reproduce most any item and make it look quite old. 439

Mrs. Red Crow gave us the woman's collection of odd-shaped stones from which Iniskims could be made. She also showed us a bag of shells, some of them already strung up and painted as Medicine Pipe Owners' necklaces. She said that Frank told her he used to help Robert Wilson with his picture-taking during the Sun Dance Encampments. Later he admitted that he sold two Bundles that had been transferred to him—a Soldier's Pipe that he got from a man called Small Buttocks, and a Crow Water Bundle (which was somewhat similar to our own Beaver Bundles) that he got from Gros Ventre Boy. [432] [778]

In his old age, Frank Red Crow joined the sacred ceremonies in a sincere way and had the respect of his People. He adopted his little granddaughter Agnes as his minipoka, and taught her about some of the Old Ways. 554 [858]

Ponah once asked us if we ever wondered why the shawl covering our sacred Pipe Bundle 778

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

buffalo went out of sight." Before this time, these Indians of the Plains had been buffalo hunters and horse raiders. Afterwards, and by a somewhat devious process, they became cattle breeders and wheat farmers.

Some one hundred and fifty years earlier, the introduction of the horse and the gun had also radically affected their mode of life. Mobility increased, the hunting range was extended, competition was intensified, both outside and inside the tribal group. The horse became the most sought-for and fought-for possession, and despite disease, accidents of climate and enemy raids, accumulation was possible and led, in the course of time, to marked wealth differences. Some men might have one hundred horses (Maximilian, Prince of Wied-Neuwied, gives a much larger figure) and some might have only a few or none. The dangers of decrease were mitigated by elaborate manipulation. The horse became not only the measure of wealth but the medium of exchange. Everything—trade goods, bride price, ceremonial privilege, and often personal support—were paid for in horses. Loss in capital was temporary. Pipes, bundles, society insignia, could all be resold, often at a profit, and a return for "gifts" or conspicuous distributions at give-aways was normal expectancy. In addition, a poor man who had to borrow a horse from a rich patron—not infrequently the band chief—would have to pay over one-half his kill to his benefactor.

Thus the fact that great numbers of horses could be accumulated and held for a considerable period led to certain advantage; and this advantage was in no way destroyed by manipulation. Shrewdly organized, it could build prestige and bring support.

It was particularly in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, when the fur trade was expanding and more goods came into the hands of the Blood, that the demonstrations of wealth became insistent. It was in this period that the rich man increased the number of his wives (he might have six or seven, while the poor man could not pay for one and had to be content with surreptitious visits to a younger and "uncertain" wife of a more fortunate tribesman); and having many wives, the rich man's tipi could be large and impressive (it was women's work to clean and tan the hides, sew them together and erect the dwelling); and it was also at this time that the "favorite," the *minipoka*, the "child of plenty" received formal recognition as a means of exploiting wealth. The influence of this institution on the father-child relationship has been significant. Today, in a different setting, its role is particularly so.

But whatever the potential increase in the food supply, or the possibility and advantage of accumulation after the introduction of the horse, for the Blood in the buffalo period, life was still precarious. Ex-

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

cepting for the sons of the rich—and they were a decided minority—skill in hunting and warfare and courage in the face of danger were the musts for survival. In a word, self-reliance was the aim and basis of training.

And self-reliance was as necessary inside the home as outside it. Not that the Blood lacked affection for their offsprings, or a desire to support them. Many observers have commented most positively on both these traits. But the dependence on the hunt and war for food and gain, the frequent movings from place to place, made the rearing of children a difficult matter. Many stories are told of newborn infants "thrown away," left to die in the bushes, either because they could not be cared for on the march, or because raiders might hear their cries and thus be led to the camping ground, or because a mother had died in childbirth (the lot of the orphan, and even the half-orphan, was, and still is, far from enviable).

It was also considered desirable to limit the number of children. Two years was the standard interval, but the longer the time between siblings, the more parents demonstrated their love for the child previously born. Moreover, abortion carried no stigma. Magic help for this purpose could be easily secured from an authorized female practitioner, and as a special favor, a stop could be put to childbearing altogether. Revealingly, barrenness is never given as a cause for divorce in this competitive society where women are highly prized as property and sex objects, and where marriage is notoriously unstable.

The hunt and war often and for extended periods took the Blood father away from home. And these absences, however necessary, were a continual threat to a child's security. For whether justified or not, and frequently he was justified, a husband was quick to suspect that "the worst" had happened while he was gone.[21] A child often heard his mother accused of adultery, often saw her beaten, and not infrequently deserted. Whatever the ultimate solution of familial disagreement, the child invariably was the sufferer. Even if his parents remained together, he often sought refuge with a nearby relative to avoid further scenes of violence. If they separated and he went with his mother, as he usually did if he was still "young," his sense of belonging might be rudely disturbed again. For often when his mother remarried, she left him with

[21] Among the Blood jealousy was and is obsessional. Many a husband approaching his end threatened to kill his wife, for only if she accompanied him on his final journey would he be sure that he alone would possess her in the next world. The only Blood confined to an insane asylum, whose case was not complicated by physical causes, attempted to murder his wife because he believed she was having intercourse with a ghost.

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

a grandmother, aunt, or older sister "because a stepfather might not treat him right."

To some degree the extended family structure, the close camp living, and the satisfactions found in agemates (the age grades were the strongest expression of solidarity in Blood society) cushioned the threat. But, however viewed, the emotional and even at times physical support that a child could expect from his parents or any other adult was limited indeed.

And the supernaturals were hardly more reliable—at least not those to whom one might appeal for personal aid. When a young man went out alone at night to some far-off place to seek a guardian spirit—in almost all instances, a male being, Old Man Sun, Morning-star, Rock Man or some animal—he did not feel that "strong" medicine would be his if only he followed a prescribed ritual, as was the case in the pueblos of the Southwest. Instead, the Blood youth appealed for "pity." And the supernaturals, like his nearest of kin, were unpredictable. True, if the quest succeeded, prestige would be enhanced, and after some years, material advantage also. But many a supplicant, even after repeated effort, failed to get a "vision" and the power that depended on it.

In this insecure and competitive setting, the institution of "the favorite" emerged, not as an expression of fatherly love but, as the Blackfoot word, *minipoka*, "child of plenty," makes explicit, first and essentially as a way of demonstrating wealth—a way no different from the taking of a second, third, or fourth wife, the owning of expensive pipes or bundles, the possession of a tipi made of eighteen or twenty skins.

There was only one accepted criterion for having a "favorite"—enough wealth to make continual validations in his name. Thus neither the number of the child nor its sex was a consideration, but while a girl could be a *minipoka*, more often it was a boy who was so honored. And the rich man had as many favorites as he could afford. Some said they wanted to treat their children alike, some that they wanted to show how rich they were.

The process began at birth. The favorite was placed on a weasel or otter skin—the poor man's child slept in a buckskin bag. The favorite was "initiated" to many ceremonial privileges—protective paintings, forelocks, charms, pipes, partnerships in a society like the Horns while he was still in his teens. Give-aways were held in his name, and any gift made to him was quickly repaid and usually with interest.

The favorite was fed first and with the choicest morsels. He was

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6 Blood

held in his father's arms long after such attention was necessary. And when he joined other children in the play camp, he was not the "husband" of some willing little girl, as was a less protected youngster. His sister remained his watchful "mother." In the main, his close companions were *minipoka* like himself, an arrangement that not only fostered a blatant élitism, but also protected the "privileged" from being ganged up on by less favored children.

Nor was the "child of plenty" permitted to visit around and stay out overnight as other boys did. Nor could he attend the socially convivial "tea dances" along with other young blades. But when his father went on a trip, the *minipoka* was, whenever possible, the companion of his choice. It goes without saying that the favorite wore fine clothes, rode good horses with beautiful trappings, married with ostentatious display. Moreover, as he grew to manhood, he was spared the onerous participation in the hunt and the dangers of the warpath. He trusted to his father's wealth to bring him positions of respect. And this trust was not misplaced. Among the Blackfoot, "great deeds in social and ceremonial life would alone elevate one to the status of headman."[22]

True, the favorite was expected to be "generous" to all and sundry. More often, however, his training made him lazy and parasitical, readier to exploit the labor of others than to add to their support.

Originally a means for validating a father's wealth, the institution of the favorite child had secondary consequences—among them, the reinforcement of sibling rivalry, the encouragement of dependency in a society where self-reliance was a major objective, and the forging of strong affectional bonds between a father and his child, most usually between a father and his son. And it is this last that has particular importance for the way in which the father image is revealed in every-day life.

Being a favorite meant submission to certain restrictions—less freedom of movement, less participation in some of the more adventurous or romantic aspects of Blood society; and, at times, this was resented. But we have no record of any Blood who rejected the substantial attentions and advantages offered by favoritism. For the *minipoka*, the father became the "giver" *par excellence*, the only reliable "giver," since their statuses were so inextricably linked.[23]

[22] Clark Wissler, "The Social Life of the Blackfoot Indians," p. 23.

[23] In the reserve period, the government was actually more "reliable." But favoritism continued and with it patterns of an earlier time that still had relevance. In fact, those Blood who had no horses, and so could not make the traditional investments in ceremonial paraphernalia and society memberships, etc., but who were otherwise successful, had favorites "the American Way"—that is, they dressed their children well and showered them with expensive gifts.

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
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But whether one was on the giving or receiving end, the relationship between a father and his *minipoka* became an exceptionally warm and satisfying one. Many of the father's gestures (his special and fine gifts to his favorite, his solicitude for the latter's comfort, and his eagerness for his companionship) were understood as demonstrations of love; and the favorite's unwillingness to be separated for any long period of time from his indulgent parent—and this even after he married—indicated the depth of his filial affection. Other fathers might be "tricksters," might abandon wife and child, but a *minipoka's* father could be relied upon to fight for the possession of his favorite son, no matter where he intended going or with whom.

To be a *minipoka* then, was highly attractive, materially and emotionally; for besides the direct benefits of wealth and position, the "child of plenty" enjoyed a continuing love and devotion in a very insecure world. Those less privileged found consolation in less rewarding substitutions and subterfuges, some parent-initiated, some inspired by their own needs. Proudly they might mention an otter skin on which they had lain at birth, a weasel-tail suit given them by a loving father, a beaded bag which held their umbilical cord; or they might recall how as a child they had played with the "real" favorites, or how a father's early death had cut short their "honorings," or alone had prevented them from becoming *minipoka*. But however gratifying such memories were to the individuals who evoked them, they never brought community recognition. Only when the spending was great and continual was a child considered a "true" *minipoka* by the Blood. Only then could he be assured of position and prestige.

Equally significant was the manner in which favoritism was extended. Understandably, this process was more outspoken and probably went further in families which were actually supporting a "child of plenty," for it was here that rivalrous feelings were particularly stimulated. But even in more ordinary families, a child thought of himself as *someone's* favorite, if not his father's, then a grandfather's or grandmother's, or aunt's, or even an own mother's, although this was rare.[26] In any case, the same comfort and support was expected from these different relatives as the "true" favorite received from his father. In some

[26] In a situation where the father was increasingly invoked as "good," numerous customs and conceptions fostered the "bad" mother image. The mother might "throw away" a newborn infant. She might abandon husband and child for reasons of lust. Her blood polluted (she was isolated at childbirth and could not approach a sick person, tend ceremonial paraphernalia, or be present "when medicine was at work" if she was menstruating). She might be "manly hearted," taking the initiative particularly in matters of sex. She was the instrument through whom sorcery power was attained. And finally she was the disciplinarian in the home.

28: Goldfrank E-4,5 (1939) 1967 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

families these relationships were taken very seriously. In all, no matter how limited the material benefits, they gave an added security to children whose sense of belonging was often shaken.

But such extensions did not alter the traditional basis of favoritism. It was the father who, almost always established a *minipoka*, and it was the father who remained the symbol of the "giver." To say, "He was like a father to me," not only implied that the individual referred to had something to offer, but that the speaker had benefited from his generosity and love. That a "true" *minipoka* might see his father as "giver" is quite understandable. But others who had enjoyed little, if any, of the favorite's privileges built a similar image. Unpleasant treatment at the hands of a father or father substitute (frequently an older brother-in-law) was recalled with little display of hostility or repressed altogether.

A man whose father had "walked out on the family" would tell with obvious pleasure of the latter's kindness to him during a short visit years afterwards; or, a man who was "raised" by his grandmother and shunted about from place to place, would say of the various heads of the households he had stayed in, "They all treated me like a son," although none of them, not even those who had "special power," conspicuously demonstrated their affection for him; or a man who had donned women's clothes and attempted suicide because his *minipoka* brother-in-law was the accepted family head, would speak most enthusiastically of the latter's "goodness" to him.

Thus it is clear that as more wealth accumulated—and this holds for the nonnative as well as for the native forms—a son's status, privilege and prestige was tied more and more to his father's; and more and more, a son felt impelled to insist that his father was outstandingly good and generous. For the *minipoka* the gap between fact and profession may not have been too great. For those who wanted to keep up with the Joneses—the less privileged and the little-privileged, and these were the overwhelming majority—it must have been wide indeed. Under these circumstances, the trickster tales undoubtedly fulfilled an important function: in a society where the institutions encouraged an idealization of the father, they offered a vigorous and uncensored release for the son's repressed feelings of aggression.

So interpreted, the differently weighted father images evoked in Blood mythology and in daily living generally become understandable. Equally understandable is the increased popularity of the trickster tales.

the children without a home. Generally the children, especially the infants, follow their mother, either back to her parents' home or into a new marriage. But the new husband does not always welcome his wife's children and a problem is created. 586 543 587

This apparently casual attitude towards children would suggest there is little concern for their welfare, that they might be regarded as more or less unwelcome hinderances to their parents' activities. It would be interesting to know the degree to which their presence influences the decision of their parents to separate or to remain together. Probably very little, since no child goes uncared for. Children may sometimes be regarded as nuisances by the younger people, but among the older folk they are definitely desired. They frequently express the wish to have young children about and this is, in a large measure, substantiated by the number of people who take their grandchildren to raise, although not always to adopt. It is felt that a person with no children will have no one to care for him in his old age. It is said that an adopted child knows what has been done for him and out of gratitude will assume more care for his foster parents than will their own children. 855 597 [855] [858]

Nearly half the households on the reserve have children living with them that were not born there. The frequency with which children are sent to live outside their own immediate family is quite noticeable. Here I should like to mention my reluctance to rely upon statistics to emphasize my points. I have a record of about 50 cases that may be considered definite adoptions, to which may be added at least 12 doubtful cases. To these are again added 20 or more even more doubtful cases, which may be just prolonged visits by a child to relatives. The 50 cases of adoption cover those of which people are aware, but I do not doubt that there are many more that have long since been forgotten. In the minds of the community the adopted children soon merge with the rest of the family. 597 597 128

Three main categories can be distinguished within this general pattern of mobility. First of all are cases where a child is visiting relatives. These visits may be of prolonged or short duration and vary in frequency. It may be a case of grandparents looking after the child while there is trouble at home between the parents, because there are too many small children to be cared for there, or for no other reason than that it is nice to visit elsewhere. 855 597

to believe this is frequently the case. 597

In the households that have adopted children, or are raising them, one might expect to encounter rivalries between the siblings and the adopted children. However, these rivalries are minimized to a large degree through age differences between the children. Where several adoptions have occurred in one family one can see how this operates. An adopted child was ten years old and already in school when a boy was born into the family. Both these children were married and away from home when a third child, a five year old boy, was adopted. In such a situation there is minimal opportunity for conflicts. 593

It is almost invariably said that adopted children are exceptionally well treated. It is thought that the adopted child is often accorded better treatment than a man's own child. There appears to be a good deal of truth in this, for adopted children seem to be consistently well cared for, to the best of their foster parents' ability. Naturally, the number of things done for them depends upon the wealth of the adopting family. In a prosperous one the child might even be considered *minipuka* or favorite child, a more or less institutionalized way of showing special affection for a child. [858]

It is felt to be quite natural for a man to be more concerned over the care of an adopted child than over his own. In the first place, he desired the child enough to ask for it. If he doesn't look after it carefully people will talk about him and say that if he cannot do better than he is doing he ought to return it. To be forced into such a course would be a great disgrace. The Blackfoot, who are materialists as well as sentimentalists, also point out that when a child has grown up and is in a position to care for his parents, he will be especially grateful to those who gave him a good home. Thus the child becomes something of an investment which will mature later when the parents are growing old and need the support of sons and daughters. [626] [858] [888]

Lowie, speaking of the Crow, says that adopted children are exceptionally well treated, as if this were compensation for the subconscious feeling that the tie is after all fictitious (Lowie 1920:78). 171

A situation in which an adopted child is given preferred treatment over a man's own children seems fraught with trouble. One would expect any number of cases where there was dissension, to say the least, between the children in a family. But instances of this sort are rare. There is one 597

33: Bradley G-3 (1871-1877) 1923
NF6 Blackfoot NF6

000 dressed skin, in which condition it passed the first year
854 of its life. Upon the march it was carried upon its mother's back, either secured with straps or more commonly supported in a fold of her robe or blanket. It was sometimes thus carried while the mother pursued the ordinary avocations of the camp, but under such circumstances it was ordinarily set away in some suitable place. It was also a very common practice to suspend it by cords to the poles in the interior of the lodge, where it was permitted to hang
857 at rest or was swung back and forth as in a cradle. The sports of the children were such as comported with their savage life, being largely made up of imitations of the pur-
524 suits to which they were destined in after years. The girls played housekeeping after the Indian fashion of that art, built miniature lodges, collected little bundles of wood and made travails. The boys sometimes spun a top of ordinary construction, putting it in motion with the hands and then by a skillful touch repeated at intervals, keeping it spinning often for half an hour. They also had a game of ball, which was played by choosing sides, and then arraying themselves opposite each other, attempting by means of a wooden bat to drive a ball through each other's ranks to
[237] a given point beyond. The ball used was about the size of a baseball and made of wound hair, covered with
868 dressed skin. The boys were furnished with a bow and arrows at an early age and given lessons in horsemanship as soon as they could sit on a horse. A youth of twelve
● [858] years was usually a fair hunter and a good horseman. The girls were employed in the drudgery of the camp as soon as they were old enough to work, but the boys were exempted from all labor except that of herding horses. They were assigned to this duty as soon as they could be trusted to ride, which was about the age of six or seven years.

Games

524 Foremost among the games of the Blackfeet was one which from want of knowledge of its Indian name we may denominate Blackfoot billiards. A hard soil was chosen as the place of the game, where a space about six feet wide